

September 8, 2020



School Bus Barrier Guidance Document

Q: Is it mandatory to have a barrier installed between drivers and passengers in a school bus?

A: In British Columbia (BC) it is not mandatory for a school bus to be equipped with a barrier for drivers. School bus operators **may** consider adding barriers to limit the spread of COVID-19 between the driver and passengers during entry, egress and/or trip duration.

There are different products available that provide a varying degree of protection against the spread of COVID-19. Personal Protective Equipment such as medical and non-medical masks, face coverings or shields, eye protection or gloves will all aid in reducing driver and passenger risk of exposure to COVID-19. School bus operators are to continue monitoring and abiding by federal and provincial public health authorities recommendations such as those published on the [Government of Canada Coronavirus website](#) and BC's [COVID-19 Order, Notices and Guidance page](#).

Q: Does there need to be a barrier between passengers?

A: In British Columbia it is not mandatory for a school bus to be equipped with a barrier for passengers. An important safety feature designed into all school buses to reduce injuries and fatalities in the event of a crash is compartmentalization. To meet this standard high back padded seats closely spaced together are installed. No modifications should be made that would increase the stiffness of seats or add rigid barriers in the area ahead, above or beside the benches as this could increase the risk of injury and/or fatality in the event of a collision. Compartmentalization requirements detailed in [Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 222](#) – School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection, must be maintained if a barrier is equipped.

Physical distancing between drivers and passengers is advised (1-2 metres of space between people) in keeping with [BC Centre for Disease Control's suggested safe practices](#). As per [Transport Canada's guidance](#), it is encouraged for drivers and passengers (Middle and Secondary school students) to wear non-medical masks/face coverings when physical distancing is not possible. Where possible, create distance between the driver and the seats immediately behind the driver by closing those seats off to passengers.

Q: What considerations should you be aware of if installing a barrier in a school bus?

A: If a barrier is installed the materials used must meet the Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

[The Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 205](#) – Glazing Materials - references American National Standard for Safety Glazing (ANSI Z26), which considers how a material breaks and how it affects visibility requirements for use in motor vehicles. When considering a barrier thought must be given to ensure the materials do not produce reflections that could impact the driver's visibility and or hinder their view.

Barrier materials must also meet the [Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 302](#) – Flammability of Interior Materials. The Standard specifies burn resistance requirements for materials used in occupant compartments



of motor vehicles. This is to prevent injuries and/or fatalities of occupants caused by vehicle fires especially those originating in the interior of a vehicle.

If installed, a barrier must be affixed to the interior of the bus and shall be free of all unnecessary projections likely to cause injury. The effectiveness of the barrier shall not be compromised nor impact the safe environment of the interior of the bus. Further, the barrier must be an enhancement to the safety or experience of the occupants or aid in the performance of the driver's tasks.

Barrier edges, must be beaded, hemmed, flanged, or otherwise treated to minimize sharp edges and remain fixed in place either when in use or if stored away. The barrier must also be designed in such a way to prevent risk between the driver and passengers during entry or egress.

If a barrier is installed and the school bus manufacturer is unable to confirm compliance with the School Bus manufacturing standard D250 – School Buses, it is recommended that the barrier not be installed, and other preventative measures be considered. CVSE cannot certify or approve a school bus that has been modified and no longer complies with Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards or the CSA D250 – School buses standard.

Q: Who can install the barrier?

A: Prior to any installation, the school bus manufacturer should be consulted as they may offer additional information concerning modifications and the potential for safety risks, which may impact the warranty of the bus. The installation of barriers in school buses are at the discretion of the school bus owners and operators. CVSE cannot certify or approve a school bus that has been modified and no longer complies with Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards or the CSA D250 – School buses standard.

Q: Do I need to have the bus inspected if a barrier is installed?

A: In British Columbia it is not mandatory for a school bus to be equipped with a barrier, nor is it a requirement (if installed) to have a barrier inspected by a designated inspection facility. All regular semi-annual inspections remain mandatory.

Buses must remain compliant with all CSA D250 and Transport Canada Regulations (applicable at the time of vehicle manufacture) if installation of non-OEM equipment takes place.

Q: How frequently does a school bus require cleaning?

A: As outlined in [Motor Vehicle Act Regulation Division 11](#), every operator of a yellow and black school bus shall ensure the floor of the school bus is washed at least once in each week with water containing a disinfectant solution.

No person shall operate a school bus that is not in a clean and sanitary condition and as outlined by provincial health and safety authorities, additional or more frequent cleaning and disinfecting procedures may be required. Further, it is recommended to service all heater and ventilation systems and filters regularly.



Additional Resources:

Transport Canada: [Further COVID-19 measures, updates and guidance for road issued by Transport Canada](#)

BC Centre for Disease Control: [COVID- 19 Self Assessment Tool, Update information for the public](#)

WorkSafeBC web pages: [COVID-19 and returning to safe operations](#) and [Transportation and COVID-19 safety](#)

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